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We may be permitted to state that the views of our contributors and correspondents do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Wednesday Review.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is vastly amusing to read the exchange of compliments, mostly left-handed, among the members of the various deputations in England. The 'moderate' delegate has no doubt that every other delegate miserably collapsed at the examination by the Joint-Committee and failure was write large on every face but his own. The other delegate is equally quick in reading similar prognostications on that of his brother. Those of the deputations who have accepted the Montagu scheme are described by their critical compatriots as servile and kotowing to the Secretary of State. Those who don't are called irreconcilables and put out of court. Whether or not the deputations will be able to enlighten the British public on the reform scheme, there can be no doubting that they afford considerable amusement to those who care to follow their doings, and incidentally confirm the impression that conditions in India are not ripe enough for political experiments on any large scale. The precedent in this respect was set by Mrs. Besant who is responsible for so many other undesirable features in our public life. When Mr. Montagu was holding his court at Dehli and was busy forging the destinies of India by constant consultations with 'advanced' politicians, she used to take readers into her confidence and tell them how this man or that looked after he was closeted with Mr. Montagu, how the smile was on his lips just like the lady of Riga who rode on a tiger and the selfsame lips were wan and blanched when he came out, with this difference that the Secretary of State was kinder to his interviewer than the tiger was to the lady; and so and so on forth. In fact when she was not treating her readers to a detailed description of the stepping of the horses, generally eight and never less than four, which bore her in triumph along routes marked out for her march by admiring reception committees she was regaling them with accounts of the poppings in and poppings out of the lucky men and women who had the ear of Mr. Montagu. The contagion has caught on and now her apt pupils are closely imitating her and the imitation is exact.

The report on the administration of Village Courts in the Madras Presidency is not very much different from the reports in the previous years. The letters of the various Collectors show that the courts are not increasing in popularity and are not commanding more confidence of the ryot population than before. Considering the class of people who in their capacity of Village Munsiffs preside over these courts, it is a surprise that they are resorted to at all. The village courts have been instituted with the best of intentions, no doubt,

to save the innocent villager the worries and cost of litigation if he has to seek justice at the ordinary courts. In saving him worry and cost there must also be a fair assurance that he will get justice. The Collector of Anantapur reports a fall in the number of suits tried by the village courts and attributes it to 'the increasing want of confidence on the part of ryot population in their Village Munsiffs'; the Collector of North Arcot reports similarly and attributes the fall to the low educational qualifications possessed by some of the village munsiffs. The Collector of South Arcot thinks that faction in village courts, has to do with it but he suggests that this difficulty can be got over by combining villages under one bench and by giving litigants the right to object to benchers who they think are prejudiced against them. The suggestion is worth trying. But the chief difficulty as he says is to find capable men to preside over such courts. We suppose there is no statutory obligation to appoint only village munsiffs to preside over the courts. Whenever munsiffs of the necessary calibre are not available, leading ryots, if sufficiently qualified, can be appointed. Even land-holders who may live in the towns may be asked to preside over the village courts if they are willing. They may visit the villages on fixed days and hear suits. It is curious that the Government merely 'record' the report. It is not a matter which should be dismissed with one word 'record.' They are expected to tell the public what they think of the report and what conclusions they draw. The village courts if properly constituted and worked will be a real boon to the villagers and it is the duty of the Government to suggest how this may be done. It won't do to simply record the report. That will not be an incentive to the District Collectors to take more interest in the matter and suggest measures to make the village courts more popular and more efficient.

It is time the Joint-Committee was told it is not a fact that whoever does not subscribe to the Montagu brand of reform is against all reform. Mr. Montagu's personal triumph consists solely in the circumstance that he has succeeded in creating such an impression. He may congratulate himself on it but it is doing small service to the cause of reform in India. It is conceivable that there may be reform without Mr. Montagu and it all depends upon the conditions here which no Secretary of State can make or mar. Changes in the administration ought to be carried out from time to time agreeably to the changing conditions independent of Montagus. If the recommendations of the Joint-Committee are to be acceptable it must disabuse itself of the false notion that Mr. Montagu's scheme alone will save India and there can be no difference of opinion on it. It is an essential preliminary to all sane thinking on the subject of Indian Reform. 'Clear your mind of Mr. Montagu and his scheme, Sirs' shall be our exhortation to the members of the Committee. In so exhorting we trust we are dealing with a more hopeful case than that of Dick. It is only when the Committee has reported we shall be in a position to know if it has got over the obsession. Meanwhile we can only hope that the evidence of Mr. Montagu's henchmen has been in some measure at least counteracted by evidence of a less obsequious kind. One of the later witnesses, an Anglo-Indian administrator of experience and repute, cared to tell the Committee that the Montagu Scheme has proceeded along wrong lines. That is about the truth and opposition to it is based upon an appreciation of this fact.

That Mr. Montagu means well by India nobody doubts. That he believes in himself and his scheme is equally undoubted. But these are not the sole considerations by which the Joint-Committee or Parliament should judge the soundness or otherwise of the scheme on which a vast mass of evidence has been let in with, perhaps, more to come. Accepting the declaration of August 1917 as the basis of reform, it will have to be considered if the reform bill provides the safeguards indicated in that declaration which emphatically lays down that the goal of responsible Government must be reached by slow and cautious steps with the advice and guidance of the Local Governments who are better judges of Indian conditions than the Secretary of State or Parliament. What has actually happened? Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford draw up a scheme of reform from which the majority of the Local Governments composed of administrators whose experience of India is very much longer and more intimate than either of the authors of the scheme can possibly claim, sharply differ. The difference is not in respect of detail but of principle. Take the diarchy as an instance in point. It is looked upon by Mr. Montagu as something too sacred to be criticised and he holds the view honestly that if the diarchy be dropped, his whole scheme goes. He has succeeded in persuading people who are as ignorant of India as himself to believe that diarchy must stand not only as an integral part of the scheme but also for the reason that no alternative to it has been suggested. It is a dangerous theory to adopt, that because an alternative is not put forth, a proposed change must be effected. Yet it is precisely the case for diarchy. The considered opposition to it of the majority of the Local Governments is ignored, thus going violently against the spirit and the letter of the Declaration which guarantees that no changes in the administration will be sanctioned without the advice of the Local Governments. In this matter Mr. Montagu would seem to regard his scheme as more sacred and binding than the declaration of August 1917.

Besides going against the Declaration, the diarchy is in utter disregard of Mr. Montagu's own reading of Indian conditions as disclosed in his report. At various places in the report he admits the fact that the large majority of the population is illiterate and propounds the very sane theory that only with the spread of education can come an electorate able to exercise the vote intelligently. It is easy to convict Mr. Montagu out of his own mouth. But he coolly forgets what he has himself said in the report and proposes the ministerial system of administration for which conditions are wholly lacking. He argues that without the diarchy it would be mockery to call a system of administration responsible or representative. Does Mr. Montagu seriously contend that for the mere fun of calling an administration responsible or representative, he must foist upon the country a political experiment whose dangers are more obvious than its advantages whatever they maybe. There is no glory attaching to a course of action which would spell ruin to a whole country to satisfy one's personal and political vanity. From the discussions on his scheme appearing in the British Press Mr. Montagu must have seen that support is given to his diarchy proposal not on its own merits, bnt on the curious ground that no alternative scheme is forthcoming. This circumstance must weigh with the Joint-Committee in coming to a decision on the subject of diarchy. We may assure Mr. Montagu in advance that the ministers who will have to be chosen under his scheme for the administration of the transferred subjects will be men absolutely devoid of any representative character, representative if at all of a phase of political life which has disgraced the annals of India within the last two or three years and which is responsible for a great deal of damage moral and mental. If the sole purpose of Mr. Montagu in forcing on us the diarchy is to entrust the responsibilities of the administration to such men, he cannot have hit upon a surer device. But if the purpose is less objectionable, he must in all honesty drop the proposal and proceed with the rest of the bill. We are sorry we have to write in this strain of a proposal on which the Viceroy and the Secretary of State have unfortunately set their hearts. But the interests of our countrymen who are ignorant of all this scheme of reform compel us to be plain and they are infinitely more important than the susceptibilities of a couple of faddists.

The Bengal Government propose to institute an Advisory Board of Health and they expect that the sanitary progress of the province will depend upon the Board. They desire the views of those interested in the subject on the manner of selection and appointment of public health officers, their status and conditions of service and the source of recruitment for the higher administrative posts of the department. These are, no doubt, important factors in the constitution of a Board of Health and will cost the tax-payer a good deal of money for whose benefit, of course, the Board is to be established. We have nothing to say against the idea. Advice in sanitation is valuable and necessary. But we fancy in all such attempts, nothing passes beyond the stage of advice. Advice may take the form of lectures, personal talks, bulletins and reports. But they do small good to the people at large. It almost always happens that the grants made from time to time for sanitation and such purposes are wholly spent upon paying special officers and staffs. Officers and staffs are necessary to carry out these objects. But there should be some money left over for expenditure upon them directly. If a protected water-supply is designed for an area a sanitary engineer and staff are needed. But the money allotted for it ought not to be spent in paying them without any balance left for the excavation of wells, etc. What we would suggest is that sanitary grants should be spent upon sanitary works as the first charge rather than on special officers, however valuable their services may be. With the existing experts a great deal more may be done to promote sanitation, if only the grants are utilized for sanitary works. The village punchayats may be trusted to use the grants to the best advantage under the advice and guidance of the experts. No new staffs need be recruited. That is how the matter strikes us. Any way there is the tendency to think more of special officers, the mode of recruiting them, their pay and pensions and less of the purpose for which they are appointed.

The *Indian Social Reformer* writes:—The place of English in Indian education connot be determined without reference to the future. The Indian statesman should take a longer view and a larger view than the Indian schoolmaster or professor whose vision is rightly concentrated on his class-room and the academic circle. The expert view in this as in other matters should subserve, not dominate, the larger purposes of statesmanship. There is no analogy between an English boy learning French and an Indian learning English. The English boy lives in a country where the administration is carried on in English and not in French; the language of business and politics likewise is English not French. The English boy wants French only to carry on a conversation with a Frenchman or to be able to read French books and newspapers. The Indian boy's requirements in regard to English are more numerous and important. Without English he cannot belong to any of the liberal professions; he cannot aspire to any place beyond a primary school teacher or a village official. Industrial openings are only for men who have received a good English education, often in England.

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LABOUR IN INDIA.

The political and social upheaval caused by the War has brought to the fore-front the problem of labour. The International Conference which is to meet at Washington next month is an indication of the place which labour has come to occupy in the course of a few short years in the scheme of things. That labour is an important factor in a country's well-being is no new discovery. Goldsmith has appraised the labourer as more valuable and more necessary than princes and lords who, according to the poet, may flourish or may fade without anyone being the better or the worse for it. In democratic countries, the labourer either in the field or at the mill or the factory has steadily won for himself a place which in more conservative countries is hardly associated with horny-handed toil. The problem of labour is acute enough there, and fortunately or unfortunately labour has not yet developed into a problem in India. It is well to recognise that the conditions of labour in western countries are different from those here, and to proceed to deal with it as if the conditions were the same will be a serious mistake and bring into existence wholly artificial and undesirable conditions. The Viceroy in his speech at the Imperial Council did well to point out that 'the great diversity of physical conditions affecting employment in India, the lack of education among workers and consequent low standard of comfort and absence of organisation, the usually poor physique of Indian labour and its inability to concentrate effort over a shorter working period, the preponderating importance of agriculture, and the lack of specialisation and skill among industrial workers render it impossible to translate propositions which are accepted in western countries as natural into terms applicable to India or to devise any formula which will convert the Indian factors into western equivalents.' This is largely a negative definition of labour conditions in India but His Excellency has been able to present the mattter in a nutshell as it were. It is good to remember what labour is not here, lest those who have constituted themselves into labour leaders or representatives should persist in their wrong notions. In dealing with the labouring classes here, these soi-disant leaders ought not to forget that even in countries like England where the keynote of national life is 'business as usual', where the bulk of the population will not tolerate anything which will interfere with their trade and commerce, it is easier to mislead labour into strikes and lockouts than to compose differences between the emyloyer and the labourer. The so-called labour leader in India is a bye-product of extremist politics and a mischievous one at that. He is better able to promote unrest among the labourers than their advancement. He finds his quarry handy at factory towns, where his mischief-making propensities may have a little scope. But we need not mix up labour with the self-constituted leader who is after all a very negligible factor. We have to look at the question from the stand-point of the labourer, which is the correct stand-point. Even he who runs may see that Indian labour is not organised and is inefficient and what may not be quite so plain is that it is extremely immobile. So that the extreme immobility of labour in India, its inefficiency and its lack of organisation, are three important facts about it which have to be recognised in any attempt to ameliorate its condition. It is a common experience of the country side that [illegible]age may be suffering from scarcity of [illegible]ur, while another village only a few [illegible]s distant will afford enough employ[illegible] for scores of labourers during a whole season. The village labourer in sea[illegible] of work will rather loaf about idly the whole day if he finds no work in his [illegible]ive village, than seek out a place where he can obtain it. That generally accounts for scarcity of labour in one place and slump in another though but a few miles apart. Here there is good scope for business enterprise. If there be organisations at all considerable villages, this inequality of conditions will disappear. A bureau of labour may take in hand a number of labourers and pay them fixed wages and by an arrangement with employers may send them to places where they may be wanted. The labouring classes are not educated enough to organise themselves, and till they are able to, such an organisation as we have suggested will be useful both to labourers and employers. The inefficiency of labour is another outstanding fact. Some time ago a writer computed the efficiency of labour and placed Germany at the top, while England only a good second, and the Indian made labourer came last. Making all allowance for the enervating effects of the climate, there is no reason why the Indian labourer should not turn out twice as much work as he does now. For one thing, organisation will improve efficiency and they are in some measure interdependent. But there are other ways of promoting efficiency. In a largely agricultural country like India, the bulk of labour will naturally and inevitably be devoted to agriculture and it would not do to divert it to other industries. Agriculture is the mainstay of this country and our aim must be to organise agricultural labour and make it more efficient.

GERMAN PROFESSORS.

By 'Workman.'

Responsibility for the war at one time was generally attributed in the World Press to 'those damned Professors' whose 'Kultur' was perceieved to be a propaganda of open war and secret deceit and treachery against Humanity under a blasphemous perversion of all Religion, and assertion of 'a Mandate' from the Almighty for unlimited licence to corrupt and destroy mankind.

The subject was taken up by 'Miles' in the *Wednesday Review* of 2nd February 1916, and it is interesting to note that owing to the address of an 'open letter' from the Rector of the Leipzig University to other Universities protesting against the dismissal at 24 hours' notice by the French Government of the German Professors in the University of Strasbourg, that the opportunity has occurred for the President of Columbia University in the City of New York to formulate 31 distinct charges against the German Government for which the responsibility of answering now rests on the Professors whose policy has all along been considered 'damned' *Madras Times* September 8.)

We shall await the reply to the charges, which may now form the field for a scientific battle between the Universities of all countries on the Principles of world Religion, and the World's Economic Work and righteous Government.

Probably the world never saw till September 1914 " the amazing prostitution of scolarship and science to national and racial lust marked by the formal appeal to the civilized world made by German Professors which may now well be recalled as being an unmixed mass of untruths placing a stain upon the moral and intellectual integrity of German scholars and men of science, in the effort to hound on German militarism and Prussian Autocracy to make mass attacks on the peaceful liberty loving nations of the world."

A Review of the 25 Theologians' 'Manifesto' by Col. Dowden R. E. appeared in the November number of *The New Reformer* (1914) published in Madras which may be perused with advantage.

It is to be hoped that our Universities here will not be backward in taking up the discussions essential in support of the League of Nations for which the present opportunity is unique for it to assume the Judgment seat, and to enforce Righteousness in the world's work and Government.

The President of Columbia University after reserving judgment of the mode of dismissal of German Professors in a University now reverted to France, evidently considered urgently necessary remarks:—

Meanwhile we invite attention to the fact that it is an established principle in England and the United States that anyone who comes into a court of equity seeking relief must come with clean hands. Before the Rector and Senate of the University of Leipzig can expect the court of public opinion to sympathize with their allegations, the people of France, England, and the United States will certainly wish to know what measure of protest, if any, the Rector and Senate of the University of Leipzig recorded against the cruel and inhuman treatment in 1914, by the German High Command, of the scholars associated with the University of Louvain and against the wanton and barbarous destruction of the library of that university. They will also wish to know what measure of protest, if any, the Rector and Senate of the University of Leipzig have recorded against any or all of the following 31 kinds of offence which it has been proved on indisputable evidence, gathered formally by national and international commissions, were committed by German armies and German agents and their allies in one or more of the countries invaded by them during the war whose issues are now in process of settlement:—

Massacre of civillians; putting to death of hostages; torture of civilians; starvation of civilians; rape, abduction of girls and women for the purpose of enforced prostitution; deportation of civilians; internment of civilians under brutal conditions; forced labour of civilians in connexion with military operation of the enemy; usurpation of sovereignty during military occupation; compulsory enlistment as soldiers among the inhabitants of occupied territory; pillage; confiscation of property; exaction of illigimate or exorbitant contributions and requisitions; debasement of currency; issue of spurious currency; imposition of collective penalties; wanton devastation and destruction of property; bombardment of undefended places; wanton destruction or religious, charitable, educational, and historic buildings and monuments; destruction of merchant ships and passenger vessels without examination or without warning; destruction of fishing boats and a relief ship; bombardment of hospitals; attack on and destruction of hospital ships; breach of other rules relating to the Red Cross; use of deleterious and asphyxiating gases; use of exploding and expanding bullets; directions to give no quarter; ill-treatment of prisoners; misuse of flags of truce; poisoning of wells.

The Rector and Senate of the ancient University of Upsala might render great service, not only to science and to scholarship, but to the cause of civilization itself, if they would bring to the attention of the Rector and Senate of the University of Leipzig, as well as to that of the proper authorities of the University of Heidelberg and the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences, the fact that acknowledgment of wrong-doing on the part of the German Government, the German armies, and the German people, and contrition for that wrong-doing, are the first and necessary steps in the rehabilitation before the world of German scholarship and German science. It is probably within the truth to say that the

universities of France, England, and the United States are awaiting, with deep interest and no small measure of anxiety, some sign that German scholars and men of science realize the enormity of the offences, public aud private, that have been committed by Germans and in the name of Germany during the war now ending, and some evidence that these scholars and men of science feel sincere regret for them.

IS INDIA PROGRESSING?

By Mr. Nagaraja Sarma, B. A., (Hons.)

The question may appear pointless or silly to some minds, but I believe the present situation in the world-the world as emerged out of the most devastating of wars—and especially the situation in India demands that we should put ourseles such a question and sincerely try to answer it. I do not ask with Mr. Archer:—Is india civilised? The question is too palpably absurd seriously to be considered even for a moment, though curiously enough the absurdity appears to strengthen Mr. Archer's conviction. My question on the other hand is "Is India progressing?" I intend discussing it taking care to avoid controversial political issues and confining my attention mainly to the ethical and philosophical aspects of progress.

What is progress? It is difficult to formulate an exact definition of progress because the elements that go to make up the concept are varied, vague, and illusive, but a provisional definition may be attempted. Progress, is, I suppose, advance from a lower to a higher state of existence, material and spiritual. Even though the terms "higher" and "lower" are relative, and consequently what is progress to one may not be so to another, still it is an undeniable fact that in all progress there is involved a clear consciousness of some rise or advance effected by the individual or the nation. The advance lies in this. Something not already in your possesssion is now secured. The achievement of the hitherto unachieved and the careful preservation of what has thus been achieved would appear to constitute the essence of progress.

Applying this criterion it is easy to see that the West—with whose destiny the destiny of India is so closely bound up—has achieved tremendous progress in recent years. She has secured over nature, victory after victory. Forces of nature have been conquered. New discoveries have been effected and infinite additions made to render man's existence more and more comfortable on earth.

Having come into contact with the civilization of the West India too has progressed. She has imbibed the spirit of the western culture, as embodied iu the English language and literature. She has studied the political and the constitutional history of Europe and Great Britain and some venture to point out that India's assimilation of European culture is nowhere more manifest than in her present day demand for Parliamentary institutions. True, It fell to India's lot to be linked to a powerful nation whose salient and welcome features have not been lost upon her. She has now got what she had not. But she should get more. She should advance her science and industries if she is to claim equal recognition at the hands of the modern European nations. Therefore, for some time to come she should always look up to the West as her model.

But is all that progress? India's progress is usually stated and measured by some in terms of her desire completely to imitate the western institutions. Let us push the question a step further back and ask:—has the west progressed? She doubtless has, if progress is to be judged by her strength of "will to power" and "will to possess." A feverish passion for more and more possession has of late characterized progress and civilisation in the West with the result that minor nationalities are always obliged to live in perpetual dread and terror of their stronger neighbour. Scientific achievement has been used not for the well-being but for the wanton destruction of one's fellow-men. Such a state of affairs can never be a sign of progress. I am rather inclined to think it signifies retrogression. This conception of progress, then, is fundamentally based upon the individualistic or the egoistic ethics of the extreme type an ardent advocate of which was the German Nietezche. His superman was to crush everything underneath his feet. He was to lord it over his fellow-men. I venture to submit this pernicious ethical doctrine is not particularly and peculiarly "made in Germany." All strong nations have this passion for possession. In a word they exploit the weaker ones.

Now, a fatal objection to the ethics of exploitation is that it seeks to treat individuals as mere means to an end. In mutual dealing a moral agent is to be considered as an ethical entity or an end in himself whose private rights and privileges have to be carefully guarded and respected. This dictum holds good not only in the relation between individuals but also in the relation between the State and the individual. Every reasonable theory of State is founded upon the principle that it is the supreme duty of the State scrupulously to respect the rights of the citizens and the latter in their turn are bound to be loyal and faithful to the State. International relations are determined on an identical principle. Subordinate nations should not be treated as mere means and any powerful nation that regards its dependent nations as mere channels or fields for its own exploitation is pursuing the dangerous path of egoistic ethics and some time or other it is bound to come to grief.

If therefore, progress neans aggression, violence, destruction, and so on we had better not strive for

such progress. As it is, in the West it has come to that unless indeed the League of Nations miraculously effects some radical change in the mental constitution of the European nations. India does not want such a progress.

There is however a profounder view of progress in which emphasis is laid upon love not force; upon altruism not egoism. If anything enables us in however small a degree to rise above our selfish and animal nature and lead a higher life of love and sacrifice to our fellowmen, *pro tanto*, it stands for progress. If this conception of progress and the underlying ethical ideal were adopted, harmony and goodwill will reign supreme between the rulers and the ruled and between the white and the black and so forth.

The position is this :—India has doubtless gained a good deal from her contact with the West and she evinces at present an intense desire to progress along certain western lines which however as the war has more than amply demonstrated, are dangerous. At the same time India has lost a good deal. Her ancient social and political institutions are beginning to disappear. In the pursuit of other culture she has neglected her own. In a word her loss is significant.

In conclusion, it is necessary to point out that in the coming world reconstruction the West should learn from the East especially from India, whatever Mr. Archer and other dramatic critics might say. The west should embrace the spiritualistic conception of progress and put an effective check upon her present career of more and more acquisition of earthly possession. I am sceptic whether the League of Nations will be able to restore peace and tranquility in the world. Some of the European nations are victorious and naturally proud. Others are crushed. While Germany, they say, is crying for revenge. How is it possible for the nations to maintain peace and good will, when they are agitated and swayed by mental unrest? Therefore, a change in the ethical ideas may be attempted. Adopt the spiritualistic ethics and cultivate a little the spirit of sacrifice and renunciation. Then the Western world will find that peace of mind she is so badly in need of to-day. When two civilizations come into contact, the intermingling of ideals is inevitable. If, however, the West continues to have its own way the League of Nations may be no better than a mere league of dreams. Time alone can decide whether the league can confer upon Europe immunity for ever from the horrors of war.

Let India improve her science and industries. She began with the spiritual and neglected her material interests. But in the pursuit of the latter let her not forget her own cultural attainments and especially her rich spiritual heritage. A wholesale pursuit either of the material or of the spiritual is a meaningless abstraction that destroys the unity of life. A judicious combination of the two is essential. To our original question then, the answer is that India has progressed and is still progressing on certain lines owing to her contact with the West. But at the same time she reveals distinct marks of retrogression. Her future progress should be directed in such a way that elments of value in her own as well as in the civilisation of the West should be combined to advantage, so that neither the one nor the other may be exclusively adhered to.

TOPICS FROM PERIODICALS.

THE MAKING OF AN AUTHOR.

MR. JOSEPH CONRAD.

MR. JOSEPH CONRAD is one of the strangest figures in literature. He has called himself "the most unliterary of writers." He did not even begin to write till he was half-way between thirty and forty. I do not like to be more precise about the date, because there seems to be some doubt as to the year in which Mr. Conrad was born. Mr. Hugh Walpole, in his brief critical study of Mr. Conrad; gives the date as the 6th of December, 1857; the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says 1856; Mr. Conrad declares in his reminiscences that he was "nine years old or thereabouts" in 1868, which would bring the year of his birth nearer 1859. Of one thing however, there is no question. He grew up without any impulse to be a writer. He apparently never even wrote bad verse in his teens. Before he began to write "Almayer's Folly" he "had written nothing but letters, and not very many of these" "I never," he declares, "made a note of a fact, of an impression, or of an anecdote in my life. The ambition of being an author had never turned up among those precious imaginary existences one creates fondly for oneself in the stillness and immobility of a day-dream."

At the same time, Mr. Conrad's is not a genius without parentage or pedigree. His father was not only a revolutionary, but in some degree a man of letters. Mr. Conrad tells us that his own acquaintance with English literature began at the age of eight with "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," which his father had translated into Polish. He has given us a picture of the child he then was (dressed in a black blouse with a white border in mourning for his mother) as he knelt in his father's study chair, "with my elbows on the table and my head held in both hands over the pile of loose papers." While he was still a boy he read Hugo and "Don Quixote" and Dickens, and a great deal history, poetry, and travel. He had also been fascinated by the map. It may be said of him even in his childhood as Sir Thomas Browne has said in general of every human being that Africa and all her prodigies were wlthin him. No passage

in his autobiography suggests the first prophecy of his career so markedly as that in which he writes. "It was in 1868, when nine years old or thereabouts, while looking at a map of Africa of the time and putting my finger on the blank space then representing the unsolved mystery of that continent, I said to myself with absolute assurance and an amazing audacity which are no longer in my character now; When I grow up I shall go *there* Mr. Conrad's genius; his consciousness of his destiny may be said to have come to birth in that hour. What but the second sight of genius could have told this inland child that he would one day escape from the torturing round of rebellion in which the soul of his people was imprisoned to the sunless jungless and secret rivers of Africa, where he would find an imperishable booty of wonder and monstrous fear? Many people regard "Heart of Darkness" as his greatest story. "Heart of Darkness surely began to be written on the day on which the boy of nine "or thereabouts" put his finger on the blank space of the map of Africa and prophesied.

He was in no hurry, however, to accomplish his destiny. Mr Conrad has never been in a hurry, even in telling a story .He has waited on fate rather than run to meet it. "I was never," he declares, one of those wonderful fellows that would go afloat in a washtub for the sake of the fun." On the otherhand, he seems always to have followed in his own determined fashion certain sudden intuitions, much as great generals and saints do. Alexander or Napoleon could not have seized the future with a more splendid defiance of reason than did Mr Conrad, when though he did not yet know six words of English, he came to the resolve "If a seaman, then an English seaman." He has always been obedient to a star. He likes to picture himself as a lazy creature, but he is really one of the most dogged day-labourers who have ever served literature. In "Typhoon" and Youth he has written of the triumph of the spirit of man over tempest and fire. We may see in these stories not only the record of Mr. Conrad's twenty years' toil as a seaman, but the image of his desperate doggedness as an author writing in a foreign tongue. "Line by line" he writes 'rather than page by page was the growth of Almayer's Folly." He has earned his fame in the sweat of his brow. He speaks of the terrible bodily fatigue that is the lot of the imaginative writer even more than of the manual labourer. "I have" he adds, "carried bags of wheat on my back, bent almost double under a ship's deck-beams, from six in the morning till six in the evening (with an hour and a half off for meals), so I ought to know." He declares, indeed, that the strain of creative effort necessary in imaginative writing is "someting for which a material parallel can only be found in the everlasting sombre stress of the westward winter passage round Cape Horn." This is to make the profession of literature a branch of the heroic life. And that for all his smiling disparagement of himself as a Sybarite, is what Mr. Conrad has done.

It is all the more curious that he should ever have been regarded as one who had added to the literature of despair. He is a tragic writer, it is true; he is the only novelist now writing in English with the grand tragic sense. He is nearer Webster than Shakespeare, perhaps, in the mood of his tragedy; he lifts the curtain upon a world in which the noble and the beautiful go down before an almost meaningless malice. In "The End of the Tether," in "Freya of the Seven Isles," in "Victory," it is as though a very Nero of malice who took a special delight in the ruin of great spirits presided over events. On the other hand, as in "Samson Agonistes," so in the stories of Mr. Conrad we are confronted with the curious paradox that some deathless quality in the dying hero forbids us utterly to despair. Mr. Hardy has written the tragedy of man's weekness "with courage never to submit or yield." Though Mr. Conrad possesses the tragic sense in a degree that puts him among the great poets, and above any of his living rivals, however the mass of hiswork cannot be called tragic. "Youth," "Typhoon," "Lord Jim," "The Secret Sharer," "The Shadow Line"—are not all these fables of conquest and redemption? Man in Mr. Conrad's stories is always a defier of the devils, and the devils are usually put to flight.

Though he is eager to disclaim being a moralist or even having any liking for moralists, it is clear that he is an exceedingly passionate moralist and is in more ardent imaginative sympathy with the duties of man and Burke than with the rights of man, and Shelley. Had it not been so, he might have been a political visionary and stayed at home As it is, this son of a Polish rebel broke away from the wavering aspirations and public dreams of his revolutionary countrymen, and found salvation as an artist in the companionship of simple men at sea.

Some such tremendous breach with the past was necessary in order that Mr. Conrad might be able to achieve his destiny as an artist. No one but an inland child could, perhaps, have come to the sea with such a passion of discovery. The sea to most of us is a glory but it is a glory of our everyday earth. Mr Conrad, in his discovery of the sea broke into a new and wonder-studded world like some great adventurer of the Renaissance. He was like a man coming out of a pit into the light. That I admit is too simple an image to express all that going to sea meant to Mr. Conrad. But some such image seems to me to be necessary to express the element in his writing which reminds one of the vision of a man who has lived much underground. He is a dark man who carries the shadows and the mysteries of the pit about with him. He initiates us in his stories into the romance of Erebus. He leads us through a haunted world in which something worse than a ghost may spring on us out of the darkness. Ironical, sad, a specator, he is nevertheless a writer who exalts rather than dispirits. His genius moves enlargingly among us, a very spendthrif of treasure—treasure of recollection, observation,

imagery, tenderness, and humour. It is a strange thing that it was not until he published "Chance" that the world in general began to recognise how great a writer was enriching our time. Perhaps his own reserve was partly to blame for this. He tells us that all the "characters" he ever got on his discharge from a ship contained the words strictly sober," and he claims that he has observed the same sobriety— "ascetism of sentiment," he calls it—in his literary work at sea. *M. A. B.*

INDIAN LITERATURE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

The history of literature is the history of thought. The study of comparative literatures is therefore not merely the study of comparative phraseology, of poetical subtleties, and of comparative philology but the comparison of thoughts and ideas in various countries and in various ages. In presenting to you now an account of the history of the literature of India, I shall therefore not be so much concerned with the external side of my theme, but will endeavour to show to you inner sanctuary or the soul of Hindu-Muslim literature; or, in other words I will pay more attention to the evolution of thought and life than to the vehicles of their expression.

From the dim and distant uplands of Central Asia descended in the dawn of history our primeval fathers. Between the lucid waters of the Caspian and Aral Seas, in the rugged country now known as Turkestan, the great Indo-Germanic family divided into two halves. What economic condition or what physical need necessitated this ramification of the parent clan we do not: and perhaps will never know. One of the branches of this Caucasian clan went westward and spread over the Continent of Europe, while the other pushed its way towards the south and flourished in the plains of Iran and India. These, our primeval fathers, called themselves Aryas, or "Friends." Some interpret Arya as noble, honourable, high, respectable. We and those races who claim descent from the adventurous and hardy clansmen of the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus Mountains still call ourselves Aryans. Some scholars, however, prefer the term Indo-German, as it is more expressive and perhaps more correct. However, we are not here concerned with the merits or the demerits of either term, nor with the arguments, ethnological and anthropological, in support of or against each. For all purposes of the layman the terms are synonymous, and for the present let us treat them as such.

The southward-going Indo-Germanic or Aryan clans which left their Caucasian homes in search of fresh pastures and new habitations spread gradually, as I have just said, over the beautiful country of Persia, and, trekking their way over the rugged uplands and snow-clad peaks of the Afghanistan Mountains and the Pamir, entered, about 2,000 B. C., the emerald valleys of Kashmir and the fertile plains of the Land of the Five Rivers by way of the passes of Khyber and Gilgit. Slowly yet surely, as opportunity presented itself and as necessity dictated, they crossed the Ganges and the Narbudda and spread across to the Gangetic plain as far as the limits of distant Assam and southward to the Nilgiris. The original inhabitants of the country were either slain or enslaved. Some however, escaped this great tidal wave. The almost sole survivors of pre-Aryan India are the Telugu and Tamil races of Ceylon and the Madras Presidency.

Such is the brief history of the invasion of the Aryans, but before I proceed to outline the evolution in their thoughts and customs, a brief survey of the origin of writing may not be out of place.

The history of the origin of writing in India, like the history of the origin of writing in any other country, has two distinct yet interallied branches of study: Firstly, the origin of the alphabet as the vehicle of verbal expression; and secondly, the origin of writing materials as vehicles of the alphabet.

Regarding the exact origin of the Sanskrit alphabet no definite information is to hand, and scholars still find themselves on uncertain and shifting sands. Professor Rhys Davids, the eminent Buddhist savant, held that the Sanskrit alphabet owed its origin to the pre-Semitic language employed in the Valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Dravidian merchants—not Aryan–brought this knowledge from ancient Babylon to India seven or eight centuries before Christ. Sir Alexander Cunningham, however, thought that the alphabet was independently developed in India. Much can be said for and against these two conflicting versions, but we need hardly enter into them now, as the controversy is mainly scholastic and archæological. Starting from the point when the alphabet already existed, I may now proceed to briefly outline the second stage in the history of writing.

The ancient Babylonians wrote their proclamations, legal documents and books on tablets of clay and on bricks. But for some reason or other tablet writing was never very popular in India copper and gold plates were often used for inscriptions, and birch-bark and palm-leaf manuscripts were also very popular. The leaves of such manuscripts are usually found to be long oblong strips with a hole in the centre through which the binding-string is passed. These documents are rare and difficult to find, but they throw valuable light on history, and are of immense interest to students of literature and archæology. You may be interested to hear that in our family library we possess two such curious manuscripts. So far they have not been deciphered, but I hope ere long the depths of the secrets which they have guarded for so many centuries will be fathomed.

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The literature of ancient India was mainly religious, and was jealously guarded by the priestly sects. The Vedas and other early works were never committed to writing until very long afterwards. They were handed down orally from father to son, teacher to disciple, for centuries, a thing unknown and unparalleled in the history of the literature of any nation. How exclusive and restricted were the privileges of scholarship and learning in those bygone days may be judged from the following passage: "The ears of a Sudra who listens, intentionally, when the Veda is being recited are to be filled with molten lead. His tongue is to be cut out if he recite it. His body is to be split in twain if he preserve it in his memory," Thus it is not surprising to find that the earliest inscriptions in metal and stone are Buddhist, and the earliest birch and palm manuscripts are also Buddhist.

Before we can fully understand tha literature of ancient India, some knowledge of the evolution of its language—I mean the Sanskrit—is essential. Prakrit plays an important part, and its relation to the parent tongue must also be clearly understood before any attempt can be made to grasp even the fundamentals of Indian literature.

The Vedic Hymns, with which we shall in due course deal, were composed in an older form of classical Sanskrit. Prakrit is of a later date. It bears the same relation to Vedic or classical Sanskrit as Italian does to Latin; Hence it would appear that every work written in Sanskrit is older than any work in the Prakrit, just as any work of Tacitus would be older than any of Dante. But, curiously enough, the case is entirely the contrary. Works in Prakrit are usually and almost in every case older than works in Sanskrit. Buddha preached, not in classical Sanskrit, but in the *patois* of his home—Prakrit or Maghadi. Buddhist scriptures have almost without exception been composed in this dialect, and the literature which has thus been created is, of course, formidable.

When Prakrit was the undisputed master of the field and had almost overshadowed its mother Sanskrit, there arose from the old school, in the fourth century B.C., a great grammarian. Panini (such was his musical name) was born about a century and a half or two centuries after Gautama Buddha had attained Nirvana. His birth marks a new epoch in the history of Sanskrit literature, of which he can veritably be called "the Father." In fact, it is due to him that we possess an "elegant," "elaborate," and "refined" classical Sanskrit (*sam-skrita.* "put together"). The works of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti all owe a debt to the labours of this profound grammarian.

Although Panini revived Sanskrit, still, the important position Prakrit had come to occupy in Buddhistie literature was such that Prakrit continued to occupy that place beside the parent language for a long time to come. By Kanhayalal Gauba in the *Journal of the East India Association.*

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SELECTION.

THE LIFE OF AN INDIAN MILL LABOURER.

When we turn to the problems of the labourer's life which have to be delt with outside the Mills, the first question which comes up for consideration is that of housing. The very same evils which undermined the domestic and moral life of England during last century, owing to the sudden, unheeded growth of slum dwellings unfit for human habitation,—these same evils are appearing with alarming rapidity in modern India and up to the present little notice has been taken of them.

Some one said to me the other day,—"What was the good of your going out to Fiji to seek for evils to remedy? All the evils which you met with over there, are here at our very doors unnoticed.

At the time, I could hardly believe this, but the fact has been borne in upon me by recent experiences that the statement is almost literally true. For instance, with regard to the inequality of the sexes and the vast preponderance of them,—I have found out now, from personal enquiry, that very nearly the same unnatural proportion of three men to every one woman exists to-day in the slum quarters of our congested cities, just as it existed in the coolie 'lines' of Fiji. The men everywhere are flocking in from the villages, leaving their wives behind them; and this is neither healthy for themselves nor for their wives. Under the agricultural conditions of Indian life, when cottage industries, such as handloom weaving, were carried on in the villages themselves. the domestic ties remained unbroken. Men lived with their wives and their children for the greater part of the year and in consequence the domestic life of India was kept comparatively pure. Indeed, it has often been noted by historians that the villages of India were, on the whole, more free from violent crime and domestic vice than those of any other country in the world.

But now this village life itself is repidly changing, especially near the large cities. A drift to the towns has begun, and this is bound to continue as the land becomes impoverished and the village industries completely die out. It may be possible to modify this drift to the towns,—and the highest statesmanship of India is needed for dealing with the question; for there can be no graver issue. But there still remains the problem, which is already there before our eyes, namely *this drift to the towns which has already taken place.*

Take for instance the slum quarters where the mill labourers live in Madras. I have seen with my own eyes the condition of things there, and I can say wiih certainty that such quarters are nothing more nor less than a hot-bed of vice and immorality. The two evils of drunkenness and prostitution become highly infectious and contagious in such quarters, like some plague or cholera epidemic. and few escape the disease. The villager coming in from his viilage to get work, in the prime of his manhood, with his passions strong, seeks instinctively some outlet for those passions and some relaxation at night from the dead monotony and straining weariness of the day. In the fresh air of his village, his daily toil was modified by the change of seasons and of occupation, and home interests and duties surrounded him on every side, making life wholesome and human and natural. But when he suddenly leaves all this and has to live his life in the close confinement of the mill room and the narrow surroundings of the slum streets, his whole nature becomes choked and stifled. His bodily passions and appetites have no natural

outlet. The consequence is inevitable. Artificial means of stimulating the passions will be sought out and provided. Sooner or later, in such quarters methods of vice, unknown in the villages. tend to become normal and habitual. They gain the prestige of custom and convention and become a *dustoor*, which every villager, coming in from the outside, soon learns to practice.

I have seen growth of *dustoor* in Fiji, and I know its terrible attractive force. Out there, thousands miles away, in a foreign country, nothing appeared able to step its power. Every one who came out fresh from home fell a victim. I have witnessed all this, yet I have wondered at times whether the growth of *dustoor* is less powerful in the slums of our Indian cities than in Fiji.

It is clear to me, that, while every appeal should be made to man's inner strength of resistance and men should be thrown back upon their own inner resources as much as possible, at the same time it is extremely difficult for them to escape from the vicious circle of their environment where it is thorughly bad and corrupt. Plans must be elaborated by which municipal improvement trusts may get to work in conjunction with the mill owners to build suitable and sanitary cottages which can ensure a healthy family life for the workman near to the Mills. No new Mills must be allowed in future where such provisions are not made. The time is ripe for such schemes to be undertaken on a large scale. What is needed is, that the urgency of the whole matter should be realised by the public, and that the present delay, which is so fatal, should be brought to an end.

A second question is the problem of indebtedness. I soon found out, in Madras, that to be a debtor at a high rate of interest was the normal state of the workman. Possibly eighty per cent were in debt. Life became doubly hard, when, each month, exorbitant sums had to be paid on some loan contracted several years ago without any possibility of repayment. A thousand petty meannesses gather round where this system is in vogue. One man preys upon another, and where the margin of subsistence is so small, such preying means a direct diminution of daily food for women and children up to the point of actual hunger. It is the weak who suffer most.

I propose now to give extracts from a picture of the life inside and outside the Mills, written by one who had been from his boyhood a mill labourer and mill clerk. I shall not disclose his name, or the names of the Mills he mentions; but I can show his paper to anyone, who is a serious student and would wish to see it. It is an authentic document.

"I am putting before you," he writes, "some of my experinces about mill hands from 1911 to 1917. I have worked in five different mills (he gives their names)—I was first enrolled as a Doffer boy on 8 rupees, when I was a boy of twelve. The working hours were 6—30 A. M., to 12—30 P. M., and 1 P. M., to 7—0 P. M. On pay-day which came after two full months, I had to give twelve annas to the Mukadam for giving me the post. Every week we used to get two annas bonus if we attended the whole week without absence. We used to collect (the 25 boys and girls there) three or six pies each and give him two or three seers of *mitai*. He was a drunkard fellow but kind to us. As there was only half an hour in the noon to take our food, we suffered greatly. On the first day I came back ten minutes late after my food, for which I was abused greatly by the time-keeper. So on the next day, no sooner my hands were dried, I ran to the Mill, but I suffered from stomach ache. So, on the third day, I carried with me my food and sat down and ate it cold there on the spot.

"Since the day I joined the Mill I used to attend a night school; and as I knew how to read and write, I got a post as office boy and afterwards as wrapping boy (11 rupees) and last of all I was given the post of assistant spinning clerk. I had to keep an account of the spinned bobbins sent up to the Reeling Department. There were eight hundred women in this room, under the direct supervisions of two Nayakins and two assistant Nayakins, who always tried to keep, in their full favour, a dozen or more of the good looking mill hands under teen, who would suit their purpose for the mill officials. On each reeling machine there were two hands who, in order to get the post, used to pay as much as two rupees the first month and 8 annas a month afterwards. Those, who would not pay, had to fall under the Nayakin's displeasure. In this way, from this department, some 350 rupees were collected every month and were divided among the Nayakins, the reeling clerks, the overseers, timekeeper, head-clerk spinning master, and sometimes even the manager himself.

"Exactly the same thing happens in the Winding Department, which is worked by women. The working hours for women were 7-30 to 12 noon, and 1-30 to 6-30 P.M. The monthly wages, on piece work, were 11 to 14 rupees. It is not very serious that the Nayakins take money from the women hands, but some of the beautiful women are misled to an immoral way of living by these Nayakins, who have already spoilt their own character.

"In the Blowing Department the hands used to go eleven to thirteen rupees, and a monthly bonus of one rupee if they never missed a single day. The men here had to pay one rupee to the Mukadam for getting the post and four annas monthly, or else wine. I could also see the condition of the card room, etc. The wages there were between thirteen and sixteen rupees per month and in the Spinning Department fourteen to seventeen rupees. One rupee had first to be paid here also, and four annas, or wine, monthly to the Mukadam. About five hundred rupees were divided between the Head jobber, jobbers, Mukadams and Doffers, and in some cases a lump sum to the carding master and manager. In the sizing and weaving departments a man has, to pay two rupees to four rupees, in the beginning, in order to get a post, and one rupee monthly later. The habit of drinking was very bad among men working in these departments. A good many lottery tickets are sold to the mill hands by the influence of their superiors. The men, when leaving work, used to receive pay by Hawala system, by which nearly one fourth of the wages were lost; but now-a-days the Mill itself

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takes Hawala by cutting an interest of 3 pies in the rupee. When the mill hands wanted to go to their native place, they used to give a previous month's notice to the Mill Manager. The notice-writing offices were kept by L.L. B.Vakils or their agents in the locality. To write a three lines notice, from four to twelve annas were charged.

"About eighty per cent. of the mill hands were drinking, but not so much during the week. The daily drunkards might be five to ten per cent. but on Saturdays and Sundays almost all used to get drunk.

"For *beedies pan supari* and tea, each hand required about five rupees. The women spent about three rupees. Generally speaking, seventy per cent. of the mill hands were under debt; but twenty per cent. were under heavy debt.

"About three out of every four men took their meals at boarding houses, called Khanawali. These were usually kept by their Mukadam or jobbers. The rate of boarding was between seven to eight rupees. They got up at five in the morning and took their morning breakfast (Nihari or Nashta). At 12-30 p.m. they used to rush to their boarding house to take their noon food, which they ate very hurriedly, as they had to be back punctually at 1 p.m. *It is a very pitiable sight to see Thousands of mill hands running to take food between 12-30 p.m. and 1 p.m.* For lodgings, six to ten mill hands hired a room, about 10 feet by 7 feet, for four to six rupees rent, and shared the rent equally between them.

"Every now and then the mill hands would go to some theatrical performance. On Saturday nights they attended their Bhajan mandali. The scenes of amusement in the Holi festival were absurd.

"About seven strikes took place when I was a working hand in the Mills. Two were for demanding early pay for a coming festival; one was for granting more holidays; two for an increase in wages: two for asking a bonus, which the clerical staff got, but not all the ordinary mill hands. The idea of a strike used to come from the jobbers or Mukadams. Most of the mill hands take four days absence each month, on account of the long working hours. When they joined the strikes they understood that it would not go on for more than a week, and then next month they would not absent themselves and thus make up for lack of pay during the strike. The principle of untouchability was not in the least observed in any of the mills.

"The mill hands were more satisfied under English mills. But now, some of the Indian mills are taking steps to look after the welfare of their men. Some of the Indian mills, for instance, have made dining sheds and good water arrangements, for which the mill hands praised them a good deal. The change has only taken place in the last two years.

"The following are the greatest needs of the mill hands at the present time:—

(1) Improved sanitary conditions. The latrines are very bad.

(2) One hour's leave for taking food, 12-30—1-30 p.m.

(3) A powerful and trustful labour Union.

(4) The spread of primary education."

This document, which was sent to me and endorsed by a social service worker, who had himself been for more than twenty years a clerk and assistant in the Mills is remarkably clear in its statements and appears to be free from exaggeration. It is just possible that he has overestimated the drunkenness on Saturdays and Sundays, which he reckons at eighty per cent.—It was certainly not so high as that in Madras. The facts which he mentioned about indebtedness I could check from my own enquiries. His estimate there is quite a moderate one, and this makes me inclined to accept his estimate about drunkenness. If this is so, the state of affairs is very terrible indeed, especially when one remembers the comparative freedom from such drunkenness in the villages. *The Modern Review.*

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NOTICE.

Ramaswami Pillai son of D. K Doraiswami Pillai risiding at Mariappa Mudali lane Little market street, Thichy applied to the District Court of Trichinopoly in O. P 94/19 for succession certificate to realize the debts due to his father and in O P. 99/19 for appointing as guardian for this minor sisters Kesavalli and Lakshmi. Both the petitions come on for hearing on the 26th September 1919.

S. VENKOBA RAU,
Vakil.

NOTICE.

திருச்சிறாப்பள்ளி தாலூகா கூத்தப்பார் கிராமத்திலிருக்கும இறந்துபோன காத்தமமாளுக்கு வரவேண்டிய கடனை வசூல் செயவதற்காக சர்டிபிகேட் கிடைக்கவேணுமாய் O P. 105 of 19 மனுவை ஷெயார் குமாரத்தியான காமாக்ஷி அம்மாள் தனக்காகவும் தன் மைனர் சகோதரிக்காகவும் திருச்சிறாப்பள்ளி டிஸ்திரிகட்டு கோர்ட்டில கொடுத்து அது 21-10-19ல் விசாரணைக்கு போட்டிருப்பதால் அனறையதினம் ஆட்சேபணையுள்ளவர்கள் பகல் 10மணிக்கு ஷெ கோர்ட்டில் ஆஜராகி தெரிவித்துக்கொள்ளலாம்.

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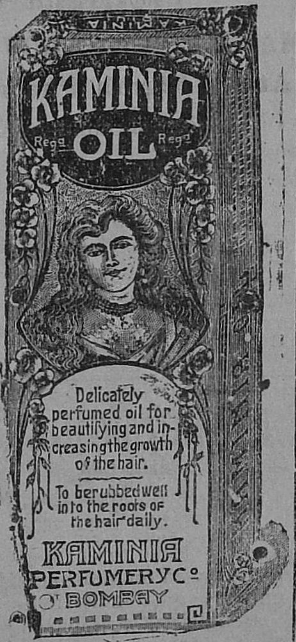

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